1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

000 The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a 605 former publication.[1]

601 Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin [582] was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The [587] brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

583 Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt 585 sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on 431 marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

606 Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the [591] well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

584 If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a 721 certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

428 At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his [764] death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 180.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in."

[554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor held the recipient. Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

[583]

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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at the time whether she would ever have a chance to acquire more of these highly desirable decorations." On the other hand, a maternal uncle would not refuse his niece or her husband anything it was in his power to give, and would always lend them horses or other kinds of property when requested. 604

Compared with the responsibilities of the maternal uncle, a paternal aunt had relatively few obligations to her nephews and nieces but correspondingly more to their mother, her brother's wife. Nevertheless it was she who took particular interest in her brother's children when they were infants. She showed regard for her brother by providing, if possible, the sack for the newborn [854] baby and the goods to pay the medicine man in case it were necessary to call one to the child-bed of her sister-in-law. If the child became ill she, too, usually paid for the necessary doctoring and it [553] was not unusual for her and her husband to assume the expense of a formal naming feast for the infant.

The paternal aunt had the duty of "bawling out" her brother's [861] daughters if they misbehaved. In regard to property, a niece would have to ask permission before using anything of her aunt, but the request was always granted. The aunt would tell her niece in an offhand way: "Well, why don't you go get it!". Whereas if someone not in that relationship had made the request, she would have gotten the object and handed it to her. A woman was expected to be as reserved with her aunt as she would be with her own mother and with her mother-in-law. A man was even more respectful to his aunt in the sense that he would not speak to her unnecessarily nor look directly at her.

When a girl married, the paternal aunt sometimes participated [583] in the bride-price, and claimed her niece's husband as "son-in-law." According to Carter Snake: "When Otter Robe's oldest sister married, the groom gave three horses, one of which went to the bride's father, one to her brother, and the third to her father's sister. The latter made for her niece's husband a fine fancy robe, treating him with the same consideration she would have accorded her own daughter's husband. Then, when this 'son-in-law' returned successfully from a raiding party, he gave his 'mother-in-law' one of the horses he had captured." It is interesting to note

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585 178 was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

585 Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

583 Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should [684] a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

591 There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[1] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[1] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.